

Functional Series 500 – Management Services
ADS 501 – The Automated Directives System (ADS)

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ADS 501 – The Automated Directives System (ADS)

501.1 OVERVIEW

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

(See [501.3.3.1](#) for information about creating the [Overview](#) section.)

USAID has a [directives management program](#) for establishing the Agency's internal regulations and required operating procedures. This program includes the [Automated Directives System \(ADS\)](#). The ADS is USAID's framework for drafting, clearing, and issuing Agency-wide internal regulations ([policy directives](#)) and required operating procedures. The ADS also includes optional material intended to help readers interpret and apply those policy directives and required procedures.

Agency employees must adhere to the policy directives and required procedures identified in this chapter and the rest of the ADS.

This chapter covers the following:

- Goals and contents of the ADS,
- Offices responsible for ADS chapters,
- Guidelines for writing ADS material,
- Guidelines for clearing ADS material and resolving disagreements in the clearance process,
- Processes for issuing new ADS material, and
- Processes for revising and issuing revised ADS material.

Throughout this chapter there are [hyperlinks](#) to other ADS chapters, as well as to [Mandatory References](#) and [Additional Help](#) documents, which provide further information on many of the topics covered here.

501.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

(See [501.3.3.1](#) for information about creating the [Primary Responsibilities](#) section.)

- a. The Bureau for Management, Office of Administrative Services (M/AS) is responsible for approving all ADS [guidance](#) and administering the USAID directives management program.
- b. The Bureau for Management, Office of Administrative Services, Information and Records Division (M/AS/IRD) Division Chief is responsible for overseeing the distribution of all Agency Directives (including the ADS CD, ADS material on the Internet and intranet, and Notices).

c. The Bureau for Management, Office of Administrative Services, Information and Records Division (M/AS/IRD) ensures that the ADS is managed, implemented, and maintained in accordance with this chapter and its references.

d. Author offices, authors, [office heads](#), and [clearing officials](#) have responsibilities relating to specific material as described in this chapter.

501.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

(See [501.3.3.1](#) for information about creating the Policy Directives and Required Procedures section.)

501.3.1 About the ADS

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

The ADS comprises USAID's official, written guidance to its employees on policy directives, required operating procedures, and delegations of [authority](#) for conducting Agency business. The ADS replaces the old AID Handbook System. The ADS is intended to help Agency employees understand their responsibilities and achieve the Agency's development goals, consistent with applicable rules, sound policy principles, and management practices. In addition to Agency-created policy directives and required procedures, the ADS contains links to relevant Federal statutes, Executive Orders, and externally created regulations (including regulations specific to USAID, Uniform Foreign Affairs Regulations, and some U.S. Government-wide regulations), which are usually incorporated into an ADS chapter as Mandatory References. The ADS links to these external references to reduce the need for ADS authors to write duplicative policy directives and required procedures. (See Mandatory Reference, [EO 12861](#).) Several ADS chapters also contain suggested but not mandatory procedures and/or links to examples of best practices.

The official version of the ADS is contained on the ADS compact disk (CD), which is updated quarterly, and in [Interim Updates](#), issued (as needed) as USAID General Policy Notices. (USAID General Policy Notices will be referred to as Policy Notices for the rest of this ADS chapter.)

The ADS must be kept current. Therefore, if you realize that pertinent material is missing from the ADS or that existing material is outdated contact the author of the appropriate ADS material or M/AS/IRD. If appropriate, the ADS material will be created or updated. (See Mandatory Reference, [List of ADS Chapters and Authors](#).)

501.3.1.1 Where Can I Find the ADS?

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

You can find the ADS on the ADS CD. The ADS CD is loaded onto the USAID/W server. Copies are also sent to Missions to be loaded onto their servers, as well as to the members of a CD mailing list. If you need to receive the ADS CD each time it is

* An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

updated, contact Tanya Broadnax, tbroadnax@usaid.gov, and ask to be added to the mailing list.

Additionally, much of the ADS is also available on the Agency's intranet and Internet home pages (on the intranet at <http://inside.usaid.gov/ADS/>; on the Internet at <http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads>).

ADS web pages are updated more frequently than the CD. ADS web pages are updated as changes are made to ADS material. The CD is updated quarterly. The deadlines for authors to submit new and revised ADS material for inclusion on the ADS CDs for 2003 and the ADS CD mailing dates are as follows:

CD #	Author Deadline	CD Mailing Date
ADS CD 30	01/13/2003	04/02/2003
ADS CD 31	04/14/2003	07/07/2003
ADS CD 32	07/14/2003	10/03/2003
ADS CD 33	10/13/2003	01/02/2004
ADS CD 34	01/12/2004	04/02/2004

501.3.1.2 Mandatory and Non-Mandatory Guidance in the ADS

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

Throughout the ADS (in chapters and references) you will find both mandatory and non-[mandatory guidance](#).

Employees are held accountable for complying with mandatory guidance. Every employee must comply with mandatory guidance unless an exception is made in accordance with established procedures.

[Non-mandatory guidance](#) is intended to help employees carry out their duties. While you are strongly encouraged to review and consider such guidance, you are not required to follow it and cannot be disciplined for not adhering to it.

In the ADS, the Agency seeks (1) to keep mandatory guidance to a minimum, preserving operational flexibility to the extent consistent with law and regulation, sound policy principles, and management practices; and (2) to be clear about which guidance is mandatory and which is non-mandatory so that expectations are clear. (See [ADS 200.3.2.4](#) for a description of how this fits into the Agency's core value of Empowerment and Accountability.)

The mandatory guidance contained in the ADS encompasses two broad categories: (1) policy directives, which comprise clear and concise rules and regulations that the Agency has identified as necessary for the proper conduct of its business; and (2) required procedures, which identify more detailed courses of action that must be followed.

* An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

Guidance on writing ADS chapters describes how authors can make the distinction between mandatory and non-mandatory guidance more obvious to readers. (See [501.3.2.2](#).)

501.3.1.3 What Does the ADS Include?

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

The ADS includes the following:

- a. Six Functional Series.** Part of the ADS consists of chapters grouped according to the Agency's functions. These groups of chapters are called the [Functional Series](#). A list of the Functional Series follows:

Series 100: Agency Organization and Legal Affairs
 Series 200: Programming Policy
 Series 300: Acquisition and Assistance
 Series 400: Personnel
 Series 500: Management Services
 Series 600: Budget and Finance

Each Functional Series contains the following:

(1) ADS Chapters. Each ADS chapter includes policy directives and required procedures as well as explanatory information on specific topics. The ADS chapter structure contains six sections: Overview, Primary Responsibilities, Policy Directives and Required Procedures, Mandatory References, Additional Help, and Definitions. (See [501.3.3.1](#) for more details on these sections.)

(2) Interim Updates (Policy Notices). Interim Updates are temporary, mandatory guidance issued as Policy Notices, Policy Cables, or Administrator Memoranda. All Agency Notices have a required format. Policy Cables and Policy Notices must be cleared and issued in accordance with this chapter. (See [501.3.4](#) for clearance information and [501.3.5](#) for issuance information.) Once Policy Notices, Policy Cables, or Administrator Memoranda that contain policy directives and required procedures are issued, M/AS/IRD loads them to the ADS web site and the ADS CD. (See [ADS 504](#) for Notice information and [ADS 549](#) for information on cables.)

By the next annual ADS certification or within one year after the Policy Notice or Policy Cable is first issued (See [501.3.7](#), Annual ADS Certification.), with rare exception, the author office should either

- Convert or incorporate it into an ADS chapter or reference, or
- Have it expire on a specified date.

* An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

b. Old AID Handbooks. The ADS also includes the old AID Handbook chapters that are still valid. For more information, see the ADS CD and click on the Handbook category button or visit the USAID Handbook web page at <http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/handbk.htm>.

501.3.1.4 What Is Not in the ADS?

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

The ADS does not contain Bureau or Office-specific policies and procedures or non-Policy Notices, that is, information, training and personnel notices; schedules and acting appointments; cables on specific matters; Bureau or Office-specific issuances; and other issuances that do not address new and continuing Agency policy or procedural matters. Nor does the ADS include annual Agency guidance, such as the Bureau Program and Budget Submission (BPBS) and Annual Report Guidance, which is issued to guide the Agency's annual programmatic and budgetary decisions. Procedures for issuing Agency Notices and cables are described in separate chapters. See [ADS 504](#) for Notice information and see [ADS 549](#), Telecommunications Management for cables.

501.3.2 Writing ADS Material

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

As stated in [Executive Order 12866](#), USAID must “draft its regulations to be simple and easy to understand, with the goal of minimizing the potential for uncertainty and litigation arising from such uncertainty.”

501.3.2.1 Who Writes ADS Material?

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

Office heads must designate authors in their Bureau or Office to develop ADS material. M/AS/IRD assists with identifying Agency offices responsible for developing ADS material.

A representative from a Bureau or Office must contact M/AS/IRD when he or she sees the need for a new ADS chapter. Authors are encouraged to use the DW List to announce this need to other authors and clearing officials. M/AS/IRD

- Advises the office on available chapter numbers and in what Functional Series the new chapter belongs, and
- Updates the [List of ADS Chapters and Authors](#).

Any disagreements over transfers in ADS chapter ownership are elevated to the appropriate management level.

Authors must develop ADS material in accordance with this chapter and update material, as necessary, to reflect changes in law, regulations, or policy. Before issuing ADS material, the primary author must obtain the required clearances. For a quick look

at the process, authors may choose to use the [Timeline: Four Step Process for Drafting, Revising, Clearing, and Issuing ADS Directives](#).

An author may ask an individual in another office, or teams of individuals from other offices, to draft ADS material or participate in drafting. In these instances, the author remains responsible for clearing material and ensuring it is updated when necessary.

When creating or revising ADS material, authors are encouraged to consult with Bureaus/Offices and Missions that may be affected by their ADS material. M/AS/IRD has created a Global Address List that authors may use to communicate with the entire ADS community. The list contains all authors and clearing officials. Authors may send e-mails to this group of people by accessing the "M.AS.IRD DW List" in Microsoft Outlook's global address list. Authors don't forget to review the [List of Required Clearances for ADS Material](#) for potential consulting offices.

501.3.2.2 Is There a Required Writing Style?

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

Yes. You must communicate clearly to Agency employees using [plain language](#). You must communicate what Agency employees need to know about your subject in order for them to do their jobs. Consistent with Agency core values, you have flexibility in how you write ADS material to best serve the development mission of the Agency. At the same time, a consistent ADS format makes it easier for the reader to use and cite the ADS. As you write, keep in mind the following:

- a. Think about the readers.** What do they need to know? What do they need to do? Organize your material to serve their needs.
- b. Promote the Agency's Core Values.**
 - Retain operational flexibility when it is consistent with law and regulation, sound policy, and management practices. (See [ADS 200.3.2.4](#).)
 - In the spirit of the core value "team work and participation," as you work on your material, consult with offices and Missions affected by your ADS chapter. (See [ADS 200.3.2.3](#).)
- c. Think about content.** You must state the core policies in the Policy Directives and Required Procedures section of your ADS chapter. Think about what information is best included in a Mandatory Reference or Additional Help document.
- d. Think about organization.** What is the simplest, most coherent organization of the information? Put information in a logical order.

- e. Know the requirements.** Have you kept your policy directives and required procedures to a minimum and are they consistent with law and regulation, sound policy, and appropriate management practices?
 - f. Know the extent of your authority.** What is your authority for establishing a given policy directive or required procedure? In many instances, you can refer directly to the applicable legislation, Executive Orders, or regulation through a hyperlink. Avoid rewriting the governing language.
 - g. Use plain language.** As defined by the Plain English Network (PEN), plain language is writing that your reader can understand the first time he or she reads it. It doesn't mean writing for a certain grade level -- it means organizing and writing for your reader. Use common, everyday words; short sentences; active voice; and, when appropriate, address the reader directly by using the pronoun "you." Avoid jargon. (See Mandatory Reference, [Guidance on Implementing Plain Language](#). Also see <http://www.plainlanguage.gov/>.) When an ADS chapter is updated, it must be written in plain language and the new ADS format. Additionally, when revising Internal Mandatory References and Additional Help documents, they too must be written in plain language.
 - h. Choose words carefully.** Make it clear to the reader what guidance is mandatory and what is not. Use words like "must" and "is required" to signify mandatory guidance. Do not use "should" when you mean "must." Use words and phrases like "might" and "is encouraged" to signify non-mandatory guidance. (See Mandatory Reference, [ADS Authors Guide to Style and Format](#).)
 - i. Be concise and accurate.** Avoid addressing the same point in several places. Do not unnecessarily restate information from other ADS chapters, Mandatory References, and external regulations. Instead, reference the existing policy or procedure. When proposing changes in existing policy or procedures, the drafter must investigate the effect on previous cross-references, reports, other ADS material, form numbers, and publications.
- In the spirit of [E.O. 12861](#), Elimination of One-Half of Executive Branch Internal Regulations, please keep non-mandatory information to a minimum in your ADS chapter. If you need to expand, please create an Additional Help document for your chapter.
- j. Use a friendly design.** As technology permits, incorporate user-friendly design features like lists, tables, "white space," and question/answer format.
 - k. Use the ADS standard format.** Follow the standard format for ADS chapters described in this chapter. (See [501.3.3](#), Format Requirements for ADS Material.)

I. Get help. Get help when you need it and write away! Feel free to contact M/AS/IRD any time during the process for editorial help with your material. M/AS/IRD requests that authors send completed drafts to ads@usaid.gov for editorial review BEFORE drafts are released for clearance. (See Mandatory Reference, [ADS Authors Guide to Style and Format](#).)

501.3.3 Format and Structure Requirements for ADS Material

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

You must write ADS chapters in the simplified, standard format and structure as described in 501.3.3.1 through 501.3.3.8 and the Mandatory Reference titled [ADS Authors Guide to Style and Format](#).

Every ADS chapter is assigned a unique number. The first number signifies its Functional Series association. The remaining numbers denote its placement within that Series. Authors must create a descriptive chapter title as well as a Table of Contents for each chapter.

Example: ADS Chapter 510

- The “5” represents Functional Series 500, Management Services.
- The “10” represents its placement within Functional Series 500.

501.3.3.1 ADS Chapter Structure

Effective Date – 01/29/2003

When writing an ADS Chapter, you must use the six mandatory chapter sections as described below:

- a. Overview.** This first section introduces the chapter and may include a brief purpose, overview, objective, and/or statement on applicability. Overviews are brief.
- b. Primary Responsibilities.** The Primary Responsibilities section includes brief, broad statements about the offices and officials (titles, not names) with key responsibilities for acting upon the policies and procedures in the chapter. This section does not include (1) all Bureaus/Offices affected by the chapter, (2) position descriptions, or (3) policy directives and required procedures.
- c. Policy Directives and Required Procedures.** This section contains the Agency policy directives and required procedures applicable to the chapter. Policy directives comprise clear and concise rules and regulations that the Agency has identified as necessary for the proper conduct of its business. Required procedures identify more detailed courses of action that must be followed. The ADS standard format also allows you to incorporate non-mandatory information into this section. (See [501.3.2.2](#), Is There a Required Writing Style?, paragraph f.)

The ADS format established in this chapter allows you to combine policy directives and required procedures in this section. Alternatively, you may separate policy directives from required procedure in this section.

This section does not include (1) internal office procedures unless they affect those outside that office or (2) text from external regulations or other ADS chapters – see the next paragraph on Mandatory References (also see [501.3.2.2](#) paragraph i).

d. Mandatory References. Under the heading "Mandatory References," the ADS incorporates the following:

- Relevant Federal statutes;
- Executive Orders;
- Regulations (e.g., USAID-specific regulations, Uniform Foreign Affairs Regulations, and some U.S. Government-wide regulations);
- Forms (both externally created and internally created) (See [ADS 505](#), Forms Management Program.); and
- Appropriate, internally-created, mandatory Agency guidance, e.g., Contract Information Bulletins (CIBs)/Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDs) and other ADS chapters.

For each chapter, this section must include the authority or legally binding instrument that authorizes and/or constrains the policy directives and required procedures in the chapter.

* This section consists of three reference lists. The first list contains External Mandatory References; the second, Internal Mandatory References; the third, Forms. The author must provide M/AS/IRD with electronic copies of these references if current versions do not already exist on the ADS CD. Whenever possible, these documents will be hyperlinked. The references must appear in alphabetical order or in hierarchical order. If your list is long, you may include a table with subsections. For an example of this reference list style, see [ADS 200.4](#). List both the title and full citation (if any).

* **e. Additional Help.** Under the heading "Additional Help," the ADS includes non-mandatory guidance intended to assist employees in carrying out their duties. Employees are strongly encouraged to read this material. This section contains two lists of hyperlinks. The first list is to optional, helpful documents. The second list links to optional forms. The Additional Help documents must appear in alphabetical order or in hierarchical order. If your list is long, you may

include a table with subsections. For an example of this reference list style, see [ADS 200.4](#). List both the title and full citation (if any). If you would like to list a document here that is a Mandatory Reference to another ADS chapter, you must explain what section of that document does not have to be adhered to and explain why.

f. Definitions. This final section contains the chapter's terms and their definitions. Place your terms, followed by their definitions, in alphabetical order. Do not capitalize terms unless you capitalize them in regular text. M/AS/IRD includes these terms in the large ADS Glossary, which contains all of the defined terms for every ADS chapter. Where possible, each term should have only one definition that is applicable for the Agency. Check the ADS Glossary for terms and definitions that apply to your subject, and reference existing definitions if possible.

501.3.3.2 ADS Glossary and Ownership of Definitions

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

If you need to create a new definition, the parameters are as follows:

- Only define terms that are **unique** to your subject matter and not universally understood. Do not define words that are defined the same way in the dictionary.
- Don't build policy into a definition.
- Cite the appropriate governing external regulation if one exists.
 - If the citation definition is short, include it as a service to the reader.
 - If the citation definition is too long, you may simply cite the specific location of the definition in that particular regulation.
 - If the existing external definition is too complex or is not written in plain language, you may paraphrase it, but do not change the content. Be sure to cite where in the regulation the definition can be found. If you need to change the content of a definition defined by a governing external regulation, contact the Office of the General Counsel (GC) for advice.

a. Ownership of Definitions

In line with the way the ADS is delineated into the six Functional Series, ownership is established for each term as follows: terms are divided up as appropriate among the author offices listed in the Mandatory Reference, [List of ADS Chapters and Authors](#).

The owner creates the definition of the term used in the ADS. Other offices having a need to define the same term must coordinate with the owner and negotiate an agreed-

upon joint definition that meets all their needs. Only if a workable joint definition cannot be negotiated may a second definition be created and listed.

b. “Multiple Definitions”

Multiple definitions of the same term are possible only in one of the two following scenarios:

- If there are substantive differences in the context to which the term applies.
- If different external regulations define the same term differently in different contexts.

Example: M/HR owns all definitions normally associated with HR functions. If PPC/B wants to address personnel issues in its chapter, it must abide by the M/HR definitions pertaining to the issue. Only if external Budget-related regulations define a term differently from the M/HR standard, and a joint definition cannot be negotiated, may more than one definition be listed.

c. How to List “Multiple Definitions”

In cases where more than one definition is necessary, the owner is listed in parentheses at the beginning of the definition, as in the following example of the definition for the term “access”:

access

(SEC) The ability and opportunity to obtain knowledge of classified information. An individual is considered to have access by being in a place where national security information is kept, processed, handled, or discussed, if the security control measures that are in force do not prevent that person from gaining knowledge of such information. (Chapters 562, 566, 567, 568)

(M/AS/IRD) The process of making a record available to an individual who is the subject of the record to inspect in person or by providing a copy of the record by mail. (Chapter 509)

This clarifies the context in which each particular definition applies.

d. How to Indicate Joint Ownership of a Definition

(1) The joint owners are listed in parentheses at the beginning of the definition, for example:

access

(SEC, M/AS/IRD) Text of joint definition... (Chapters 509, 562, 566, 567, 568)

(2) If the original owner wishes to retain primary ownership of the definition, a negotiated combined definition is indicated as in the following example. The primary owner is listed in parentheses, and all the applicable chapters are listed at the end:

access

(SEC) Text of joint definition... (Chapters 509, 562, 566, 567, 568)

e. Revising Definitions

ADS chapters must receive ADS clearance. But, if you create, cancel, or make substantive changes only to your definitions, you only need to send the definitions to PPC and M/AS/IRD for clearance, along with a completed AID Form 3-252, USAID Directives System – Issuance Request. If you are revising a definition to comply with an external regulation, this is considered a [conforming amendment](#) and does not require clearance. (See [501.3.4.9](#).)

501.3.3.3 ADS Chapter Numbering

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

Every ADS chapter has a required structure and numeric codification. The six mandatory sections previously described in [501.3.3.1](#) are the basis for the structure and numeric codification of every ADS chapter. The Policy Directives and Required Procedures section of every ADS chapter may include up to three levels of codified text, as follows:

501.3	Introductory policy directive or required procedure statement
501.3.1	Second level of policy directive/required procedure statements
501.3.1.1	Third level of policy directive/required procedure statements

You may also create lists within these levels. These non-codified lists are not reflected in the Table of Contents.

The specifics for structure and numeric codification of an ADS chapter are located in the Mandatory Reference titled [ADS Authors Guide to Style and Format](#).

501.3.3.4 Using Asterisks to Show Revisions, Additions, and Deletions Within an ADS Chapter and Agency-Created Mandatory Reference

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

Asterisks are removed when a chapter is updated, not each time an ADS CD is released. When you revise ADS material, remove asterisks from previous revisions. Place an asterisk (*) in the left margin next to all new or substantively revised paragraphs. Additionally, place an asterisk in the left margin where you remove substantive material. New ADS chapters or chapters that have been entirely rewritten do not require asterisks throughout the text. M/AS/IRD will insert asterisks in the table

* An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

of contents when the chapter is complete. (See [501.3.5.3](#) for a discussion of [effective dates](#).)

If you remove an entire codified section from your chapter, you must insert a sentence indicating the name and number of section you deleted, for example, "[Removed former section 501.2.3.4, How to Hyperlink References]."

501.3.3.5 Hyperlinking From an ADS Chapter to Another Document

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

If you would like the reader to be able to hyperlink to a Mandatory Reference, an Additional Help document, or another section within your chapter, you must indicate that desire by typing the document title or section number in blue, bold, underlined text where you want the hyperlink. For example,

Information on Agency Notices can be found in [ADS 504](#).

Section 508 accessibility standards, described in [36 CFR 1194](#), Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards, apply to this chapter.

The Mandatory Reference, [ADS Authors Guide to Style and Format](#), is an aid for authors when creating and revising chapters.

By noting your wish, M/AS/IRD will know where to insert the appropriate technical code. With the appropriate technical code in place, when readers click on the blue, bold, underlined lettering they will be taken to the appropriate document. On the ADS CD, M/AS/IRD will link to the electronic file. On the ADS web site, M/AS/IRD will link to specific references if provided. If not, we will link to the appropriate home page for laws, statutes, and regulations (e.g., CFRs, EOs).

When you revise a chapter, please work with the most recent version, which may already contain hyperlinks to your reference documents. Contact the ADS staff to obtain the most recent version at ads@usaid.gov.

You may choose to insert additional hyperlinks when revising a chapter. Please use the Agency standard hyperlink blue, bold, underlined font for links. You must send M/AS/IRD an electronic version of each reference, even if you insert your own hyperlinks.

501.3.3.6 Required Technical Format for ADS Chapters and References

Effective Date – 07/31/2001

In addition to the requirements that follow in this section, you must comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 when creating ADS chapters. (See [501.3.3.7](#).) The lists below are based on the technical requirements that the Agency has adopted. (See Mandatory Reference, [ADS Authors Guide to Style and Format](#) for more details on these requirements.)

a. Required Technical Format for ADS Chapters:

- Word
- Arial 12 pt. font
- One inch margins on all sides
- Left justified text
- Page numbering (bottom of page, right)

b. Optional Technical Format for ADS Chapters:

- Bold text
- Underlined text
- Italicized text
- Tables and charts (see [501.3.3.7](#) paragraph a)
(Keep in mind that your document will often be printed on a black and white printer. When transformed into shades of gray different colors may look the same. Do not make reference to colors without a legend.)
- Hyperlinks
- Bookmarks
- Automatic numbering
- Bullets
- Endnotes and footnotes
- Tagged-Image File Format (TIFF) files, Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG) files, and Graphics Interchange format (GIF) files (You must create a text description to accompany each image.)

c. Do not use the following technical functions when creating ADS chapters:

- Headers
- Footers in addition to page numbering and footnotes
- Automatically inserted dates
- Color (text)
- Moving text/animation
- Bitmap Image format (BMP) files (Save your BMP files as GIF or JPEG files. GIF and JPEG files are compatible with ADS technical requirements.)

d. Do not use the following technical functions when creating ADS references:

- Automatically inserted dates
- Moving text/animation

- Bitmap Image format (BMP) files (Save your BMP files as GIF or JPEG files. GIF and JPEG files are compatible with ADS technical requirements.)

Additionally, before creating an ADS reference with a product (or software package) not included in the Microsoft Office Suite, please contact M/AS/IRD. (See [501.3.3.8](#) for form requirements.)

501.3.3.7 Section 508 Format Requirements

Effective Date – 10/15/2002

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act requires that

- Federal employees with disabilities have access to and use of information that is comparable to the access and use by Federal employees who are not individuals with disabilities; and
- Members of the public with disabilities seeking information or services from an agency have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to the access and use by members of the public who are not individuals with disabilities.

In order to provide documents that are accessible to individuals with disabilities and to meet the requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, authors must adhere to the following guidelines:

a. ADS Chapters and Internally Created References

(1) Tables: Use the Insert Table command on your toolbar in Word to format material in Word table structure. Word tables create cells in gridlines that are navigable using the Tab key. Do not create tab tables. Tab tables are created using the Tab key to line up the columns. This is not a true table structure.

(2) Charts/graphics: Use charts, tables, and graphics only when necessary. If your material contains needed charts or graphics, provide a text description (1) immediately following the chart or graphic or (2) in an endnote.

(3) Font size: ADS chapter text must be written in Arial 12. As a general rule, don't use a font size any smaller than Arial 10. Forms and tables that require smaller fonts in order to fit the screen may be exceptions to this rule.

(4) Styles: If you create Word Styles, keep them as simple and minimal as possible. M/AS/IRD will insert ADS header styles and an automatic table of contents in ADS chapters.

b. Externally Created References

Obtain Word or text versions of all external references and send them to M/AS/IRD. If you submit a PDF version of a reference or a scanned document, you must also submit a Word or text version. If, after an extensive search for a Word or text version you are unable to find an accessible version of the document, then you must supply M/AS/IRD with an e-mail address for readers to contact if they cannot access the document.

See Mandatory Reference, [36 CFR 1194](#), Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards.

Consult the following web sites for more information on Section 508:

- <http://inside.usaid.gov/M/accessibility/> (This web site is available only to those with access to USAID's intranet.)
- <http://www.section508.gov/>

501.3.3.8 Forms

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

In accordance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, when electronic forms are used, the form must allow people using assistive technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all directions and cues. (See Mandatory Reference, [36 CFR 1194](#).) If your ADS material refers to a form, you must obtain a Section 508-compliant version of the form.

All new and revised AID forms must be submitted to M/AS/IRD for clearance. (See [ADS 505](#), Forms Management Program.)

501.3.3.9 Exceptions to the Format Requirements

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

There are three exceptions to the ADS format requirements, as follows:

- a. Prior Guidance.** Old AID Handbook sections included in the ADS have not been converted to the standard format required by the Agency. Handbook authors must format these old sections and incorporate them into the applicable Functional Series as time and resources permit. Similarly, authors of ADS chapters issued or in process before March 31, 2000, must convert the ADS chapters to plain language and the standard format as time and resources

* An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

permit. (See Mandatory Reference, [Presidential Memorandum on Plain Language](#).)

The next time these ADS chapters are updated, they must be converted to the ADS standard format and written in plain language. Additionally, when revising Mandatory References and Additional Help documents, they too must be written in plain language.

b. Interim Updates. Interim Updates issued as Policy Notices and Policy Cables have a required format. Policy Notices and Policy Cables must include the effective date of the new or revised material and a statement about what the material replaces, if applicable. (See [ADS 504](#) for Notice information and See [ADS 549](#), Telecommunications Management, for cables.)

c. Mandatory References and Additional Help. There is no required structure for Mandatory References and Additional Help. However, there are technical formatting and section 508 requirements. (See [501.3.3.5](#) and [501.3.3.7](#).)

501.3.4 Required Clearance Process for ADS Material

Effective Date – 01/29/2003

*All new, revised, or canceled material must be cleared, before issuance. ADS material includes chapters, terms and definitions, Agency-created Mandatory References, AID Forms, AAPDs, Policy Notices, Policy Cables, and Handbook changes. (See [501.3.4.9](#) for information on what kinds of changes do not have to be cleared.)

Authors must obtain clearance for their material. Certain offices listed in the Mandatory Reference, [List of Required Clearances for ADS Material](#) must be given an opportunity to review and clear on all ADS materials; other offices also listed in the same Mandatory Reference review and clear only those materials which relate to specific topics. Are there exceptions to the ADS clearance process? Yes, see [501.3.4.10](#).

501.3.4.1 How Do I Obtain Required Clearances?

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

As an author, you must

a. Check clearance list. Before distributing material for clearance, contact M/AS/IRD for the most recent clearance list.

b. E-mail your clearance request. Provide draft ADS material to clearing officials and solicit clearances by electronic means. If appropriate, also attach new and revised external references for clearing officials. (See [Sample E-mail Requesting ADS Clearance](#))

* An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

- **Global address list** - You may use the global address list called “ADS Clearance Mail List” to capture all of the “always required” clearance points. If you use this global address list, you also *must* check the “sometimes required” list for additional clearance points. These folks are listed in the Mandatory Reference, [List of Required Clearances for ADS Material](#).
- **Read receipts** - You *must* obtain “read receipts” of your clearance e-mail. You must print and keep these read receipts for your ADS clearance package. (See [501.3.4.8](#).)

Here’s how. When you are composing your e-mail message in Outlook,

- Click on the Options button at the top of the message.
- Under “Voting and Tracking Options” check the box next to “Request a read receipt for this message.”
- When the recipient of your e-mail opens the message, you’ll get an e-mail that tells you what day and time they’ve opened it.
- *Print this out.*
- Include this with your clearance packet that is sent to M/AS/IRD.

- **Subject line** - Type “*ADS Clearance Requested*” at the beginning of your e-mail subject line. It helps the clearing officials know what you’re sending.
- **Time frame** - Allow clearing officials a full 10 working days to clear, from the date you send out the draft with a request for clearance.
- **Clear direction** - Indicate in your request for clearance that clearing officials have the option to do one of the following in writing within 10 business days:
 - Advise that they clear the material,
 - Advise that they cannot clear until their substantive comments are resolved (They must include their comments.),
 - Advise that clearance by that office is not required, or
 - Request additional time.
- **Description of New Policy** - Include a brief description (for example, bullet points) of the new or revised policy/procedure that you’re asking them to clear. You may also use the strikeout, highlighting, and underlining commands to show proposed changes in your document. (See also [501.3.3.3](#) and [501.3.5](#).)

501.3.4.2 What Does a Clearing Official Do?

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

Clearing offices must designate and inform M/AS/IRD of a single contact person to respond to requests for clearance. This person, the clearing official, must ensure that the appropriate personnel analyze clearance drafts. This consists of consulting with all appropriate Bureau, Office, *and* Mission staff.

As a clearing official you must

- Review ADS material for Agency compliance/conformity with policies and practices that have broad applicability to the entire Agency.
- Provide comments and suggestions primarily to substantive issues, rather than routine editing. (You may recommend [editorial changes](#) if important for clarity.)
- Deliver one of the following responses to the author within 10 business days:
 - Advise that you clear the material,
 - Advise that you cannot clear until your substantive comments are resolved (You must include your comments.),
 - Advise that clearance by your office is not required, or
 - Request additional time.
- Designate an alternate clearing official if you will be away from the office. Please use the Out of Office Assistant feature. This Outlook feature will let ADS authors know that you are out of the office and can direct folks to your Bureau/Office's backup for the ADS clearance process.

Here's how.

1. Before you leave the office

- Click on the Tools menu at the top of your Outlook screen.
- Click on Out of Office Assistant.
- Click on the button that says "I am currently Out of the Office."
- Add text to the Auto Reply box, e.g., "I will be out of the office until February 23, 2002. In my absence, please contact John Doe for ADS inquiries and Jane Doe for all other matters."

2. When you return to the office.

- Click on the Tools menu at the top of your Outlook screen.
- Click on Out of Office Assistant.
- Click on the button that says "I am currently In the Office."

If a clearing official changes, the Division Chief or Director of that Bureau or Office must notify M/AS/IRD of the change in writing.

501.3.4.3 What If a Clearing Official Does Not Respond?

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

If you, the author, do not receive a response from a clearing official at the end of 10 full working days, you must make sure you have an Outlook return receipt from that official. If so, you may proceed. If you do not have a return receipt, you must contact the official to find out why they did not open your clearance e-mail.

501.3.4.4 How Do Authors Respond to a Clearing Official's Comments?

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

When you receive substantive comments from clearing officials, you must

- Incorporate the comments into your material, if appropriate. You must re-circulate substantively revised material for ADS clearance, together with an explanation or notation of the changes. Authors must allow clearing officials five business days to respond. Purely editorial revisions do not require another clearance.

or

- Contact the clearing official for written agreement if you do not wish to incorporate the comments. (For example, sometimes you may agree to wait to incorporate their comments until the next revision of the chapter.)

501.3.4.5 How Are Differences Between Authors and Clearing Officials Resolved?

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

While author offices and clearing officials must attempt to resolve substantive and jurisdictional issues raised in the clearance process, this is not always possible. Depending on the circumstances, involved offices refer the matter to an appropriate official or body at a level above the office heads of the differing offices, to make a final decision. Authors must not send final documents to M/AS/IRD without resolution on all clearance comments. (See [501.3.4.4](#) on responding to comments.)

501.3.4.6 What Is M/AS/IRD's Role in the ADS Clearance Process?

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

The M/AS/IRD Division Chief, or his or her delegate, must approve all cleared, final ADS material before issuance. In addition to its role as the approving office, M/AS/IRD

- Ensures that all appropriate clearing officials are contacted;
- Informs the author of any omitted official;
- Reviews the document for grammatical errors and adherence to ADS style and format and makes constructive suggestions in the interest of improving the document;
- May identify duplicative or conflicting policy; and
- Maintains the official list of required clearances containing the name of a contact person for each clearing office. This includes updating the list and circulating changes to the list for informational purposes. (See Mandatory Reference, [List of Required Clearances for ADS Material](#).)

501.3.4.7 How Do I Respond to M/AS/IRD's Comments?

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

You must incorporate M/AS/IRD's grammar and ADS format corrections and plain language edits. You must consider M/AS/IRD's other queries and comments when completing your document.

501.3.4.8 Do I Have to Document Clearances?

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

Yes. You, the author, must maintain documentation showing all responses and clearances received from clearing officials. Documentation includes your original request for clearance, return receipts, clearing official comments, written explanation of actions taken, and any supporting documentation. You must send a paper copy of these documents to M/AS/IRD. (See [501.3.5.1](#), Submitting Your ADS Material for Issuance.)

501.3.4.9 Must Editorial Changes and Conforming Amendments Be Cleared?

Effective Date – 10/15/2002

No, editorial changes and conforming amendments do not require ADS clearance.

- a. Editorial changes.** Editorial changes are simple clarifications that DO NOT alter the substantive meaning of the ADS material. Editorial changes include punctuation changes, grammar corrections, updates to office symbols, address and name changes, and hyperlinking additions.
- b. Conforming Amendments.** Conforming amendments alter ADS material only so as to
 - Include new or revised external regulations (this means precisely that change specified in the external regulation; this does not include the

creation of new or revised USAID procedures to implement the regulation);

- Comply with policy already contained in other ADS chapters or Internal Mandatory References;
- Incorporate written policy issued by the Administrator; or
- Amend or add one office's procedures that do not have a substantial impact on any other Agency office. Authors must send M/AS/IRD an e-mail explaining how the change does not substantively impact another office.

Conforming amendments do not require ADS clearance. You must complete an AID Form 3-252 to have conforming amendments issued.

If editorial changes or conforming amendments become effective before the next quarterly CD update, the author must create a Policy Notice and submit it to M/AS/IRD for issuance. This Policy Notice does not require ADS clearance. (See [ADS 504](#) for information on Notices.)

501.3.4.10 Are There Exceptions to the ADS Clearance Process?

Effective Date – 10/15/2002

Yes. A description of current exceptions to the ADS clearance process and instructions on how to obtain an exception follow.

a. Current Exceptions

- (1) The Administrator or Deputy Administrator may issue guidance.
- (2) Regulations published in the *Federal Register* are exempt from the regular ADS clearance process. However, the regulation must be cleared through GC and any other appropriate offices. Externally issued Mandatory References, such as statutes, regulations, and Executive Orders, are also exempt from the clearance process.
- (3) Substantive changes to ADS 101 can only be made in accordance with the procedures outlined in ADS 102, Agency Organization (see [102.3.10](#)). Clearing officials may only submit editorial changes during the ADS clearance process for ADS 101.
- (4) ADS Chapter 103, Delegations of Authority, is exempt from the ADS clearance process. The author of this chapter must still submit final documentation to M/AS/IRD before revisions will be issued. (See [501.3.5.1](#))

* An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

(5) ADS materials that require negotiation with the unions are exempt from being cleared by the entire list of ADS clearance officials. This exception applies to material from the Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources (M/HR). However, M/HR's material must be cleared through GC, and, as appropriate, through the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (EOP), before submission to the unions.

M/HR will use its judgment in deciding who will be involved in the development of its policies and procedures (e.g., Administrative Management Staff (AMS)) and will document, in writing, such involvement for ADS records. M/HR must also send material to M/AS/IRD before union clearance. (See [501.3.4.6](#), What is M/AS/IRD's Role in the ADS Clearance Process?) M/AS/IRD will return any comments to M/HR within 10 business days. Once agreement is reached with the unions, M/HR will provide the materials to the Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination (PPC), the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA), and GC for informational purposes. The final material and clearance packet must be sent to M/AS/IRD for issuance. (See [501.3.5.1](#), Submitting Your ADS Material for Issuance.)

Additionally, EOP will provide its ADS material to the unions for review and comment before sending it out for ADS clearance.

(6) Business Transformation Executive Committee (BTEC) decisions that required changes to the ADS are subject to intensive and high-level Agency review, and therefore have been granted an exception to the regular ADS clearance process. The responsible office must complete an AID Form 3-252, indicate that the change was approved by the BTEC, and attach documentation of the BTEC approval. Mr. John Marshall, AA/M, must sign the AID 3-252. Authors should send draft BTEC Notices to ads@usaid.gov for review before issuance.

b. How to Obtain an Exception

If the Director of an author office believes his or her office needs to deviate from the existing ADS clearance process, he or she must submit a memorandum requesting an exception to the Division Chief of M/AS/IRD for approval.

501.3.5 Issuing ADS Material Effective Date – 03/31/2000

501.3.5.1 Submitting Your ADS Material for Issuance Effective Date – 07/31/2001

Once you receive required clearances and resolve any remaining differences, you must submit the following material to M/AS/IRD:

* An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

- a. Hardcopy material to M/AS/IRD
 - A completed hardcopy of [AID Form 3-252](#), USAID Directives System – Issuance Request. A description of additions and deletions must be included on or with the 3-252.
 - A hardcopy of the cleared ADS material.
 - All hardcopy documentation related to clearances.
- b. Electronic material to M/AS/IRD through ads@usaid.gov
 - An electronic copy of the cleared ADS material. (All strikeouts and highlights must be removed.)
 - Web addresses of references, when available.

501.3.5.2 What Happens After You Submit Your Material?

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

The following steps complete the ADS issuance cycle *after* the author submits the required documentation:

- a. M/AS/IRD reviews the final chapter or reference for ADS style, ADS format, and grammar. M/AS/IRD sends the material back to the author with corrections and any final suggestions.
- b. The author makes the appropriate changes, if any, and sends the material back to M/AS/IRD for publication.
- c. M/AS/IRD (1) prepares the final and adds the [revision date](#) and effective dates, (2) checks the accompanying documentation for required clearances, (3) retains all master copies and ADS clearance documentation of ADS material submitted by authors, and (4) sends the author an e-mail with a copy of the final material.
- d. When the final chapter, including all references, or a specific reference is ready, M/AS/IRD issues it on the next quarterly ADS CD update and posts it to the ADS web pages (maintained by M/AS/IRD).
- e. M/AS/IRD will include a brief description of your additions and deletions in the ADS What's New page and the Series Overview chapter (if one exists).

Before each CD is issued, M/AS/IRD creates a draft CD and invites authors who have new or revised material on the CD to review the hyperlinks in their material.

If policies in new or revised ADS material become effective before the next quarterly update, or if immediate release is desired, the author must submit this material to

* An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

M/AS/IRD for issuance as a Policy Notice so that all points in the Agency receive the information. Authors may choose to use the [Sample Policy Notice Issuing a New or Revised ADS Chapter](#). (See [ADS 504](#), Agency Notices.) Within 15 business days of its release as a Policy Notice, the material is posted to the ADS web site. Otherwise, M/AS/IRD will post your ADS material to the ADS web site when your material is released on the ADS CD.

501.3.5.3 Effective Dates, Revision Dates, and Origination Dates

Effective Date – 01/29/2002

- a. **Effective dates** are dates when specific sections within an ADS chapter become effective. The author provides these dates to M/AS/IRD on the AID Form 3-252. M/AS/IRD will insert the new effective date (obtained from the AID Form 3-252) in each section that was substantively revised (that is marked with an asterisk). See [501.3.3.4](#) for a discussion of asterisks in chapters. Additionally, each internally created Mandatory Reference has an effective date. This date will appear at the top of the document.
- b. The **revision date** appears in the upper right corner of each page in an ADS chapter and at the top of the first page in an Internal Mandatory Reference or Additional Help document. This is the date that M/AS/IRD finalized the document for distribution. This date is not an effective date for policy directives or required procedures in the document. This date is used for version control.
- c. The [origination date](#) is the date that the requesting official signed the AID Form 3-252 for the original chapter or reference. These dates will appear in the appropriate Effective and Certification files. Contact M/AS/IRD for internal reference origination dates. M/AS/IRD began to track origination dates for ADS CD 26.

501.3.5.4 Exceptions to Issuance Procedures

Effective Date – 10/15/2001

If the Director of an author office believes his or her office needs to deviate from the existing ADS issuance process, he or she must submit a memorandum and completed AID Form 3-252 requesting an exception to the Division Chief of M/AS/IRD for approval.

ADS Chapter 101, Agency Programs and Functions and ADS Chapter 103, Delegations of Authority, have exceptions to the ADS issuance process. These chapters explain the functions and responsibilities for each Bureau and Office and the Agency's delegations of authority. Since these chapters are updated so frequently there is no need for the authors to issue Agency Policy Notices every time they are updated. However, changes to these chapters will be posted to the ADS web pages within 15 days of completion of the final. The authors are still required to submit the electronic documents to M/AS/IRD for final review and must submit the required hard copy documentation as cited in [501.3.5.1](#) to M/AS/IRD.

Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives (AAPDs) are issued to a mailing list that includes the Agency's acquisition and assistance professionals. The AAPDs are posted to the following website:

http://www.usaid.gov/procurement_bus_opp/procurement/cib/subject.html. AAPDs are not always released concurrently as Policy Notices. AAPDs are Mandatory References to ADS 302 and are added to ADS CDs as they are issued.

501.3.6 Maintaining ADS Material

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

ADS authors must regularly review ADS material (chapters and references -- internal and external) and modify it to ensure that it is up-to-date and consistent with law and regulation, sound policy, and management practices. This includes determining when material is no longer relevant or necessary and can be eliminated.

501.3.7 Annual ADS Certification

Effective Date – 03/31/2000

M/AS/IRD conducts an annual review of ADS materials. ADS material includes chapters and all references (forms, internal and external documents, mandatory and optional) and Interim Updates. In March of each year, author office heads must conduct a review of ADS material for which they are responsible. Then, they must notify M/AS/IRD as to whether or not their material is still effective and provide a timeline outlining revision plans. The head of an ADS author's office must also ensure that a designated person is fulfilling the role of author, even after the ADS chapter in question is published. M/AS/IRD sends a request for certification e-mail to appropriate Directors and Division Chiefs. The appropriate office heads or their designee must certify that their office's ADS policies and procedures are current.

501.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES

(See [501.3.3.1](#) for information about creating the Mandatory References section.)

501.4.1 External Mandatory References

- *a. [36 CFR 1222.44, Directives documenting agency programs, policies, and procedures](#) (This is an authority for the chapter.)
- b. [36 CFR 1194, Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards](#)
- c. [Executive Order 12861, Elimination of One-Half of Executive Branch Internal Regulations](#)
- d. [Executive Order 12866, Regulatory Planning and Review](#)
- e. [Guidance on Implementing Plain Language, July 29, 1998](#)

* An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

- f. [Presidential Memorandum on Plain Language, June 1, 1998](#)
- *g. [44 U.S.C. 3101, Records management by agency heads, general duties](#)
(This is an authority for the chapter.)

501.4.2 Internal Mandatory References

- a. [ADS 102, Agency Organization](#)
- b. [ADS 200, Introduction to Managing for Results](#)
- c. [ADS 504, Agency Notices](#)
- d. [ADS 505, Forms Management Program](#)
- e. [ADS 549, Telecommunications Management](#)
- f. [ADS Authors Guide to Style and Format](#)
- g. [ADS Chapters and Authors](#)
- h. [Clearance List for ADS Material](#)
- i. [USAID-Federal Regulations for Web Accessibility](#)

***501.4.3 Mandatory Forms**

- a. [AID Form 3-252, USAID Directives System - Issuance Request](#)

501.5 ADDITIONAL HELP

(See [501.3.3.1](#) for information about creating the Additional Help section.)

- a. [Sample E-mail Requesting ADS Clearance](#)
- b. [Sample Policy Notice Issuing a New or Revised ADS Chapter](#)
- c. [Timeline: Four Step Process for Drafting, Revising, Clearing, and Issuing ADS Directives](#)

***501.5.1 Optional Forms**

501.6 DEFINITIONS

Effective Date – 10/15/2002

(See [501.3.3.1](#) for information about creating the Definitions section.)

* An asterisk indicates that the adjacent information is new or substantively revised.

The terms and definitions listed below have been incorporated into the ADS Glossary. See the [ADS Glossary](#) for all ADS terms and definitions.

Additional Help

An Additional Help document provides non-mandatory guidance intended to clarify Agency policy and its application. For example, these may include "how-to" guidelines and non-mandatory reference material. These documents may repeat policy, but do not contain new policy.

Some Additional Help documents used to be Agency policy documents. They are now considered to be Additional Help documents because they are no longer mandatory, but at least parts of the document are regarded as relevant and helpful. Employees are not required to adhere to guidance contained only in Additional Help document, even where that guidance is stated in mandatory language. Nevertheless, in the interest of due diligence and adequate preparation they are encouraged to review and think through issues identified in Additional Help documents. (Chapter 501)

authority

An authority is the legally binding instrument that authorizes and/or constrains the policy and procedures issued as USAID direction. These instruments include laws, regulations, Executive Orders, court decisions, and rulings by Federal authorities. "Authority" refers to the legal ability or power to give commands, enforce compliance, or make decisions. (Chapter 501)

Automated Directives System (ADS)

The ADS is a standardized system comprising (1) USAID internal mandatory guidance, including policy directives and required procedures; (2) external mandatory guidance applicable to USAID; and (3) non-mandatory guidance to help employees interpret and properly apply internal and external mandatory guidance. (Chapter 501)

Automated Directives System Compact Disk (ADS CD)

The name of the compact disk (CD) containing the Automated Directives System (ADS). The ADS CD is one method of distributing USAID directives. (Chapter 501)

clearing official

A clearing official is a person in a specific Bureau or Office obligated to review and clear ADS material. (Chapter 501)

conforming amendment

Conforming amendments alter ADS material only so as to

- Include new or revised external regulations (this means precisely that change specified in the external regulation; this does not include the creation of new or revised USAID procedures to implement the regulation);

- Comply with policy already contained in other ADS chapters or Internal Mandatory References;
- Incorporate written policy issued by the Administrator; or
- Amend or add one office's procedures that do not have a substantial impact on any other Agency office. Authors must send M/AS/IRD an e-mail explaining how the change does not substantively impact another office.

ADS clearance is not necessary for these changes. (Chapter 501)

directives management program

The directives management program provides Agency personnel with the means to document and convey Agency policy directives and required procedures to users through written instructions. (Chapter 501)

editorial changes

Editorial changes are simple clarifications that **do not** alter the substantive meaning of the ADS material. Editorial changes include punctuation changes, grammar corrections, updates to office symbols, address and name changes, and hyperlink additions. (Chapter 501)

effective date

The date that specific policy directives and/or required procedures within an ADS chapter or internally created reference become effective. Effective dates only change when substantive modifications are made within the document. (Chapter 501)

Functional Series

Automated Directives System (ADS) chapters and Interim Updates are grouped according to the Agency's functions. These groups of chapters are called Functional Series. (Chapter 501)

guidance

Guidance is a general term that includes policy directives, rules, regulations, advice, and other information relevant to the conduct of USAID business. The critical distinction is between mandatory and non-mandatory guidance, as defined below. A particular document may contain both mandatory and non-mandatory guidance.

a. mandatory guidance

Guidance specifying *required* actions and behavior on the part of Agency employees and operating units, signified by phrases like "must," "must not," "is required," or the equivalent. Employees are held accountable for adherence to mandatory guidance, and must comply with it unless an exception is made in accordance with established procedures. Policy directives – mandatory guidance contained in documents prepared according to ADS procedures – are clearly identified as mandatory. A document written before the initiation of the

ADS may also contain mandatory guidance that remains in force, in which case it is classified as an Internal Mandatory Reference.

b. non-mandatory guidance

Guidance intended to assist employees in carrying out their duties, but does not specify required actions and behavior. Employees are strongly encouraged to review and consider such guidance. (Chapter 501)

hyperlink

A hyperlink is specially marked underlined and colored text that you click on to move from one place in a document to another file, another location in the same document, or a web page. (Chapter 501)

Interim Updates

Interim Updates are temporary, mandatory guidance that will either be (1) incorporated into the appropriate Automated Directives System (ADS) chapter or reference or (2) expire on a specified date. Interim updates are issued as Policy Notices, Policy Cables, or Administrator memoranda. This guidance is cleared through the ADS clearance process and distributed Agency-wide via e-mail. (Chapter 501)

Mandatory References

Mandatory References comprise relevant U.S. Government regulations created outside USAID, as well as documents containing mandatory guidance that have been created within USAID but not in Automated Directives System (ADS) chapter format. These references are cited and hyperlinked in ADS chapters.

a. External Mandatory Reference

External Mandatory References are relevant Federal statutes, Executive Orders, and other external regulations (e.g., USAID-specific regulations, Uniform Foreign Affairs Regulations, and some U.S. Government-wide regulations).

b. Internal Mandatory Reference

An Internal Mandatory Reference is a document created within the Agency that contains mandatory guidance (often accompanied by additional, non-mandatory guidance), but which has not been created in ADS chapter format. Adherence to all mandatory guidance contained in Internal Mandatory References is required. (Chapter 501)

office heads

For the purposes of ADS Chapter 501, an office head is a Supervisor, Division Chief, Director, AA, or someone delegated by the Division Chief, Director, or AA to sign the USAID Directives Issuance Request Form (AID 3-252) and who has oversight authority for the ADS material. (Chapter 501)

origination date

The origination date is the date that the requesting official signed the AID Form 3-252 for the original Automated Directives System (ADS) chapter or reference. The date will appear in the appropriate ADS chapter Effective and Certification file. This is not necessarily the first effective date for the chapter or reference. (Chapter 501)

Overview

The Overview is the first section of an Automated Directives System (ADS) chapter. It introduces the chapter and may include a brief purpose, overview, objective, and applicability. (Chapter 501)

plain language

As defined by the Plain English Network (PEN), plain language can be understood by your reader at first reading. It doesn't mean writing for a certain grade level -- it means organizing and writing for your reader. Writing in plain language saves time and money for writers and readers. Writing in plain language includes using common, everyday words, short sentences, active voice, and, when appropriate, addressing the reader directly by using the pronoun "you." (Chapter 501)

policy

USAID policy includes both mandatory guidance (policy directives and Internal Mandatory References) as well as broader official statements of Agency goals, guiding principles, and views on development challenges and best practice in addressing those challenges. (Chapter 501)

policy directive

A clear and concise statement of mandatory guidance that the Agency has adopted to guide the conduct of its business. Contained in documents prepared according to ADS procedures. (Chapter 501)

Primary Responsibilities

The Primary Responsibilities section of an Automated Directives System (ADS) chapter is a list of the offices/officials (titles, not names) with the key responsibilities for acting upon the policy directives and required procedures in the chapter. This section does not include (1) all Bureau/Offices that are affected by the chapter, (2) position descriptions, and (3) policies and procedures. (Chapter 501)

revision date

The date that Automated Directives System (ADS) chapters, Internal Mandatory References, or Additional Help documents are finalized for distribution. This is not an effective date. The date appears in the upper right corner of each page in an ADS chapter. A revision date will appear at the top of the first page in an Internal Mandatory Reference or Additional Help document. (Chapter 501)

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